

Treatment options

An overview of the major types of treatment available to patients. Many of these methods are available for other cancers as well.

ACTIVE SURVEILLANCE



- Prostate cancer may not require treatment where it develops slowly, is confined to the prostate gland and presents no symptoms.
- The patient is monitored periodically through rectal examination and blood tests.
- Tissue samples may be collected through biopsy and examined under the microscope.

HORMONE CONTROL



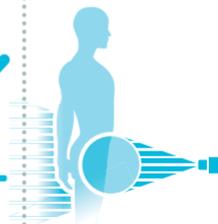
The growth of prostate cancer may be slowed by suppressing male sex hormone production using drugs, or by removing the testes.

PROSTATECTOMY



- The prostate gland is removed under general anaesthesia in an operation lasting three to four hours.
- Patient remains in hospital for a few days and recovers at home over a few weeks.

EXTERNAL-BEAM RADIO THERAPY



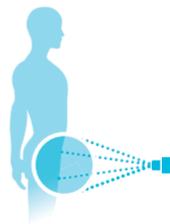
- Gamma radiation is delivered from a source outside the body.
- May damage healthy tissue, especially when the prostate gland moves during treatment.
- An outpatient procedure done several times a week for about eight weeks.

BRACHYTHERAPY



- A type of radiotherapy that targets cancer cells more precisely using radioactive “seeds” planted inside the prostate gland using needles.
- The localised radiation is released over a few days but a hospital stay is not required.

PROTON THERAPY



- Targets cancer cells using a highly accurate beam of protons generated by a particle accelerator.
- Painless procedure with almost no side effects as the protons do not travel beyond the cancer cells, unlike radiation.

CRYOTHERAPY



- A procedure performed under anaesthetic, in which cancer cells are killed by freezing them with argon gas delivered through needles.
- Patients are hospitalised for one to two days.
- Possible side effects include short-term pain or blood in the urine, or longer-term erection problems.

MAGNETIC RESONANCE GUIDED FOCUSED ULTRASOUND



- A non-invasive technology using ultrasound to generate high temperatures to destroy cancer cells.
- Treatment is monitored in real time using magnetic resonance imaging.
- Only a single session is needed; patients return to normal life in a day or two.